

Message Text

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SUBJECT: CRAWFORD CASE

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REF: MOSCOW 18049

1. THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE ON THE CRAWFORD CASE IS FROM
THE WASHINGTON POST OF AUGUST 9:

2. "AN ARREST IN MOSCOW: WHAT'S AT STAKE FOR U.S.
BUSINESS BY E. BARRETT PRETTYMAN JR.

3. "AMERICAN BUSINESS EITHER IS INSUFFICIENTLY AWARE OF
A SERIES OF EVENTS NOW TAKING PLACE IN MOSCOW, OR DOES
NOT UNDERSTAND THE IMPLICATIONS OF THOSE EVENTS OF ALL
PERSONS SEEKING TO DO BUSINESS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. I
REFER TO THE ARREST, CONTINUED INTERROGATION AND PROBABLE
TRIAL OF FRANCIS ("JAY") CRAWFORD, THE AMERICAN SENIOR
MANAGER FOR THE SOVIET UNION OF INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER
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EXPORT COMPANY.

4. "ON JUNE 12, A NUMBER OF PLAINCLOTHES MEMBERS OF THE
KGB FORCIBLY DRAGGED CRAWFORD FROM HIS CAR IN DOWNTOWN
MOSCOW, GASHING HIS HEAD AND BRUISING HIS ARMS AND LEGS IN
THE PROCESS. THEREAFTER, THEY HELD HIM FOR AN INITIAL

PERIOD OF 15 DAYS FOR QUESTIONING. HIS FINANCEE, THE SECRETARY TO AN AMERICAN EMBASSY OFFICIAL, WAS WITH HIM AT THE TIME OF HIS ARREST, AND SHE, TOO, WAS MANHANDLED AND HURT, ALTHOUGH SHE WAS ALLOWED TO DRIVE OFF AFTER CRAWFORD WAS PLACED UNDER KGB CONTROL.

5. "DURING A JUST-COMPLETED TRIP TO SIX CITIES IN EUROPE TO STUDY ECONOMIC POLICIES AND INTERNATIONAL ANTITRUST PROBLEMS, A CONTINGENT OF SEVEN OUT OF 32 AMERICAN ATTORNEYS MADE A SIDE TRIP ONE EVENING TO MEET SECRETLY FOR ALMOST FOUR HOURS WITH CRAWFORD, WHO BY THEN HAD BEEN PLACED UNDER THE RESTRICTED CUSTODY OF OUR AMBASSADOR, AT THE APARTMENT OF A U.S. OFFICIAL. CRAWFORD WAS FORTHRIGHT AND EVEN VIGOROUS IN DEFENSE OF ALL HIS ACTIONS AND ADAMANT ABOUT HIS INNOCENCE.

6. "IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS ARREST, HE SAID, HE ASKED TO CALL THE AMERICAN EMBASSY. HIS REQUEST WAS DENIED. THE RUSSIANS NOTIFIED OUR EMBASSY THE DAY AFTER HIS ARREST, AND AN EMBASSY OFFICIAL WAS ALLOWED TO VISIT HIM BRIEFLY, BUT THE TWO WERE NOT PERMITTED TO SPEAK ALONE.

7. "THE FINEL POSSIBLE CHARGE AGAINST CRAWFORD MENTIONED TO HIM AT THE OUTSET OF HIS INTERROGATION RELATED TO ALLEGED CUSTOMS OR SMUGGLING VIOLATIONS. NO DETAILS WERE GIVEN TO HIM. ALTHOUGH CRAWFORD IS PROHIBITED BY UNCLASSIFIED

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THE TERMS OF HIS RELEASE FROM DISCUSSING PRECISELY WHAT WAS DONE TO HIM WHILE IN CUSTODY, IT WAS OBVIOUS FROM HIS RECITATION THAT DURING THE NEXT FIVE DAYS, VARIOUS TYPES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESSES - THE "GOOD GUY, BAD GUY" APPROACH IN PARTICULAR - WERE USED AGAINST HIM, AND HE WAS FORCED TO TRACE IN DETAIL ALL ASPECTS OF HIS LIFE WHILE WORKING FOR INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER IN THE SOVIET UNION.

8. "AMONG OTHER THINGS, HE TOLD THE KGB HOW, SOME TWO YEARS BEFORE, THE CURTAINS IN HIS OFFICE WERE DISCOVERED TO BE OF UNEQUAL LENGTH, AND HE SOUGHT OUT A SEAMSTRESS TO CORRECT THE PROBLEM. HE WAS INTRODUCED TO A RUSSIAN SEAMSTRESS AND HER HUSBAND, AND THEY PERFORMED THE NECESSARY CUTTING AND WEAVING, AT THE SAME TIME REFUSING TO TAKE ANY MONEY FOR HER WORK.

9. "OVER THE SUCCEEDING TWO YEARS, CRAWFORD SAW THE SAME COUPLE ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, INCLUDING SOCIAL ONES. THE SEAMSTRESS PERFORMED VARIOUS SMALL SEWING TASKS FOR HIM, EACH TIME REFUSING PAYMENT, AND HE IN TURN GAVE THE COUPLE SEVERAL SMALL GIFTS, NONE OF ANY SUBSTANTIAL VALUE, IN RETURN FOR THE COUPLE'S FRIENDSHIP AND GENEROSITY.

10. "AT THE END OF FIVE DAYS OF INTERROGATION AND HIS RECITATION OF THOSE FACTS AMONG MANY OTHERS, THE CASE TOOK A DRAMATIC TURN. CRAWFORD WAS CONFRONTED WITH A SWORN STATEMENT FROM THE SEAMSTRESS. A FEW DAYS LATER, HE WAS SHOWN A SECOND STATEMENT, FROM HER HUSBAND. THE STATEMENTS ALLEGED THAT CRAWFORD HAD GIVEN THE COUPLE 8,500 AMERICAN DOLLARS IN EXCHANGE FOR FROM 20,000 TO 24,000 SOVIET RUBLES. AS A RESULT OF THOSE STATEMENTS, THE POSSIBLE CHARGES AGAINST CRAWFORD WERE CHANGED FROM THOSE RELATING TO CUSTOMS TO ALLEGED CURRENCY VIOLATIONS.

11. "CRAWFORD STRONGLY RIDICULED THE CHARGES TO OUR GROUP,
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CLAIMING THAT THEY WERE ABSURD ON THEIR FACE. ANYONE EVEN VAGUELY FAMILIAR WITH THE SOVIET BLACK MARKET KNOWS THAT CRAWFORD, IF HE HAD BEEN INTERESTED IN PROFITEERING, COULD HAVE OBTAINED A MUCH BETTER EXCHANGE RATE FROM ANY CAB DRIVER OR FROM ANY OF THE HORDES OF BLACK MARKETEERS WHO ROAM THE STREETS OF MOSCOW. MOREOVER, ALL OF HIS FINANCES WERE SO CAREFULLY MONITORED BY HIS EMPLOYER AND THE COMPANY'S ACCOUNTANTS THAT SUCH TRADING WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE.

12. "CRAWFORD SAID THAT AFTER HE HAD INITIALED PAGES SUMMARIZING HIS FIVE DAY INTERROGATION - NO VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT WAS MADE OR AT LEAST SHOWN TO HIM - ALL QUESTIONS ABOUT CURRENCY VIOLATIONS CEASED, AND HE WAS THEREAFTER ASKED SOLELY ABOUT SUCH MATTERS AS THE MAKE-UP, LAYOUT AND OPERATION OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY. TEN MORE DAYS WERE SPENT IN THAT TYPE OF ORDEAL.

13. "IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM ME, CRAWFORD SAID THE FIRST THOUGHT THAT WENT THROUGH HIS MIND WHEN HE WAS ARRESTED WAS THAT HE WAS BEING TAKEN AS A HOSTAGE FOR THE TWO SOVIET GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES WHO HAD BEEN ARRESTED IN NEWARK, N.J. FOR ALLEGEDLY SEEKING TO BUY INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION. CRAWFORD FEELS THAT HE WILL BE FOUND GUILTY IF THEY ARE, DESPITE HIS INNOCENCE. HIS TRIAL HAS BEEN SET FOR SEPTEMBER TO COINCIDE WITH THE NEW JERSEY PROCEEDINGS. IF CONVICTED, HE FACES EIGHT YEARS OF HARD LABOR AND THREE YEARS OF EXILE. IN THE MEANTIME, HE CONTINUES TO BE QUESTIONED ON AN INTERMITTENT BASIS FOR MANY HOURS AT A TIME BY THE KGB.

14. "THIS SMALL, PORTLY, UNIMPOSING MAN, WHOM ALL AMERICAN OFFICIALS IN MOSCOW DESCRIBED TO US AS THE LEAST LIKELY
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PERSON TO COMMIT ANY TYPE OF CRIMINAL OFFENSE, ASKS IN
WONDER WHY HE SHOULD BECOME A PAWN IN INTERNATIONAL

POLITICS, WHY HIS LIFE SHOULD BE RUINED AS A RESULT
OF EVENTS THOUSANDS OF MILES AWAY AND HAVING NOTHING TO
DO WITH HIM. THESE ARE OF COURSE, PERSONAL AND HIGHLY
UNDERSTANDABLE CONCERNS.

15. "BUT THERE ARE OTHER ASPECTS OF THE CASE THAT ARE
LESS UNDERSTANDABLE. AN INFORMAL POLL BY THE ASSOCIATED
PRESS OF 25 FIRMS DOING BUSINESS IN MOSCOW FOLLOWING
A PLEA FOR SUPPORT BY INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER'S PRESIDENT
RESULTED IN ONLY FIVE DIRECT EXPRESSIONS OF SUCH SUPPORT.
THREE FIRMS EXPRESSED NO INTEREST, SEVEN WERE NONCOMMITTAL
AND THE REMAINING SEVEN REFUSED ALL COMMENT. NO
DISCERNIBLE REACTION HAS COME FROM BUSINESS IN THE UNITED
STATES OUTSIDE OF INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER ITSELF.

16. "THAT, I SUBMIT, REFLECTS EITHER A DANGEROUS LACK OF
KNOWLEDGE OF THE AFFAIR OR A TOTAL FAILURE TO RECOGNIZE
WHAT IS AT STAKE FOR EVERY AMERICAN WHO IS CONDUCTING
BUSINESS WITH THE SOVIET UNION, OR WHO IS,
CONTEMPLATING THE POSSIBILITY OF DOING SO.

17. "IT IS CLEAR FROM THE CRAWFORD CASE AND SIMILAR
INCIDENTS THAT INCRIMINATING STATEMENTS AGAINST AMERICAN
CITIZENS CAN EASILY BE OBTAINED BY THE KGB FROM RUSSIANS
WHO THEMSELVES FEAR FOR THEIR LIVES. MOREOVER, SOVIET
CURRENCY LAWS ARE SO COMPLICATED THAT TECHNICAL VIOLATIONS
CAN BE CONJURED UP VIRTUALLY AT WILL.

18. "BUT IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT RUSSIANS RESPECT AND
REACT TO A SHOW OF FORCE AND TO GROUP PRESSURE. IF
AMERICAN BUSINESS MADE IT UNMISTAKABLY CLEAR THAT IT
WOULD NOT STAND FOR THE KIND OF TREATMENT BEING ACCORDED
CRAWFORD, EVEN IF SUCH A STAND MEANT A SLOWDOWN OR
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CESSATION OF SOVIET-AMERICAN BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS, SUCH
INCIDENTS WOULD BE FAR LESS LIKELY TO OCCUR. BUT IF IT IS
TO BE "BUSINESS AS USUAL," AS THE RUSSIANS MADE CLEAR TO
US THEY FULLY EXPECT IT TO BE, THEN THESE INCIDENTS WILL
ESCALATE, AND THE PERSONAL SAFETY OF ALL AMERICANS WHO
FIND THEMSELVES IN THE SOVIET UNION FOR WHATEVER PURPOSES
WILL INCREASINGLY BE JEOPARDIZED.

19. "JAY CRAWFORD'S CASE SHOULD MAKE IT CLEAR THAT ANYONE CAN BECOME AN UNWITTING AND UNWILLING PAWN IN THE SOVIET AMERICAN POLITICAL CHESS GAME, EVEN IF HE DOES NOTHING BUT GO ABOUT HIS DAILY BUSINESS. ONLY A SHOW OF ABSOLUTE ABHORRENCE FOR BRUTAL ARRESTS, EXTENDED AND SECRET INTERROGATIONS, AND MANUFACTURED CHARGES WILL HAVE ANY EFFECT ON THE RUSSIANS IN THE FUTURE.

20. " OUR GROUP OF 32 DID ITS PART. WE SPOKE OUT WITH VIGOR AT EACH OF OUR LIMITED OPPORTUNITIES. BUT WE FELT VERY MUCH ALONE." VANCE

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